



Tales of Durga

Vol. 514 Rs. 25



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India



Tales of Durga

Goddess Durga is as widely worshipped as Vishnu and Shiva. She is the fierce form of Devi who, as Shakti, is considered the personification of universal energy. According to the Devi Bhagavata the Universe is but Her manifestation – and even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva worship Her. Durga is worshipped in sixty-four forms as Ambika, Kali, Chamundi, Devi, Uma, etc.

The worship of Durga is supposed to be more than 4,000 years old in India. The names of Uma and Parvati occur in the Taittiriya Aranyaka and the Kena Upanishad. Some Indologists are of the opinion that the figure seated on a lion in the coins of Ases I, the Shaka ruler (c. 5 B.C. to A.D. 30), represents Ambika or Durga.

Durga is worshipped in one form or another in almost every Indian village.

This Amar Chitra Katha is based on the Durga-Saptashati of the Markandeya Purana.



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Editor : Anant Pai

© India Book House Limited, 1978. • Reprinted September, 1998.

ISBN 81-7508-129-5

Published by Anant Pai for India Book House Limited, Fleet Bldg, Marthandras Vaswji Road, Marni Naka,

Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400 059 and printed by him at Tintup Art-o-Print, A/57, 1st Floor,

Blundup Industrial Estate, Palmadai Silk Mills Compound, L. B. S. Marg, Blundup (W), Mumbai - 400 078.

DURGA - THE SLAYER OF MAHISHA



THE ASURA, MAHISHA, ONCE PERFORMED SEVERE PENANCES TO PROPITIATE BRAHMA. PLEASED WITH HIS AUSTERITIES, BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



LORD, MAKE ME IMMORTAL.

ALL WHO ARE BORN MUST DIE. YOU CANNOT ESCAPE DEATH.

MAHISHA BECAME DOUBTFUL.

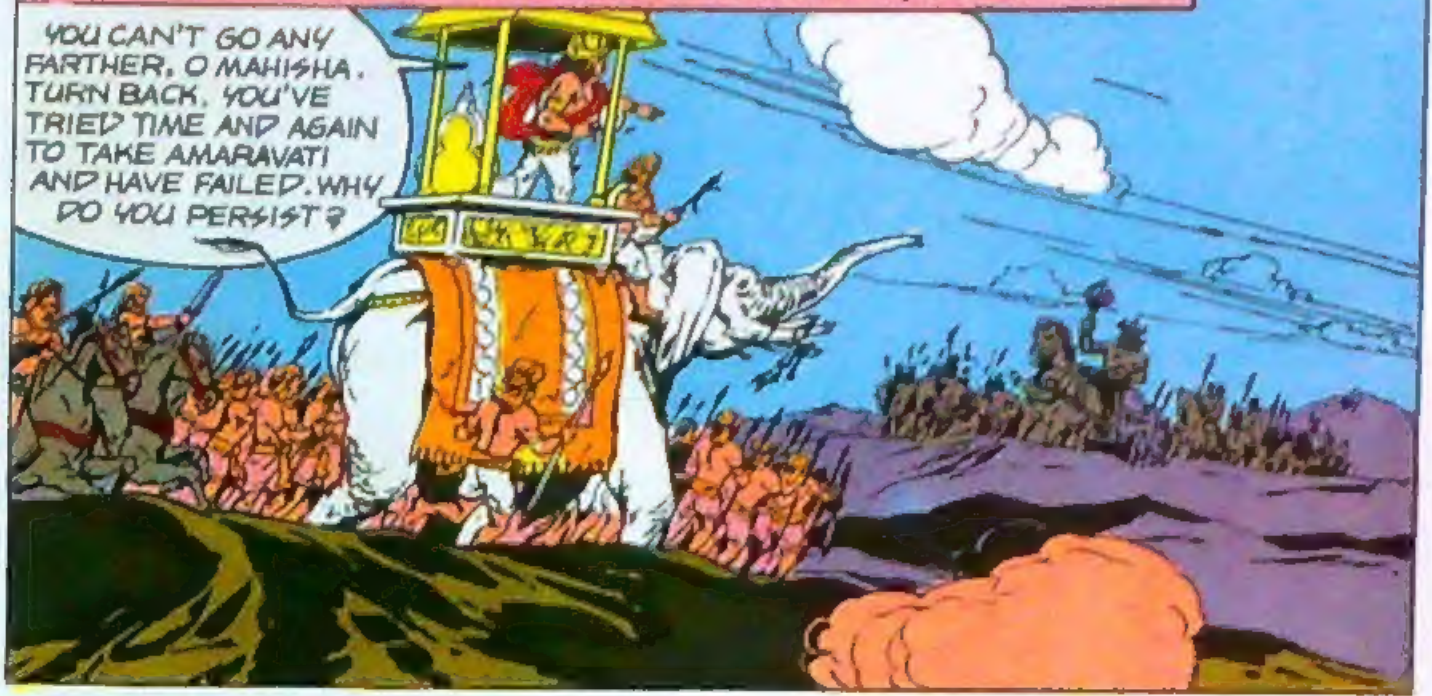


WHAT SHALL I DO? HAVE I PERFORMED ALL THOSE PENANCES FOR NOTHING? AH! I HAVE IT!



A LITTLE LATER, INDRA RUSHED OUT OF AMARAVATI, HIS CAPITAL.

YOU CAN'T GO ANY FARTHER, O MAHISHA. TURN BACK. YOU'VE TRIED TIME AND AGAIN TO TAKE AMARAVATI AND HAVE FAILED. WHY DO YOU PERSIST?



INDRA, I'VE COME TO FIGHT, NOT TO TALK. USE YOUR WEAPONS INSTEAD OF YOUR TONGUE!

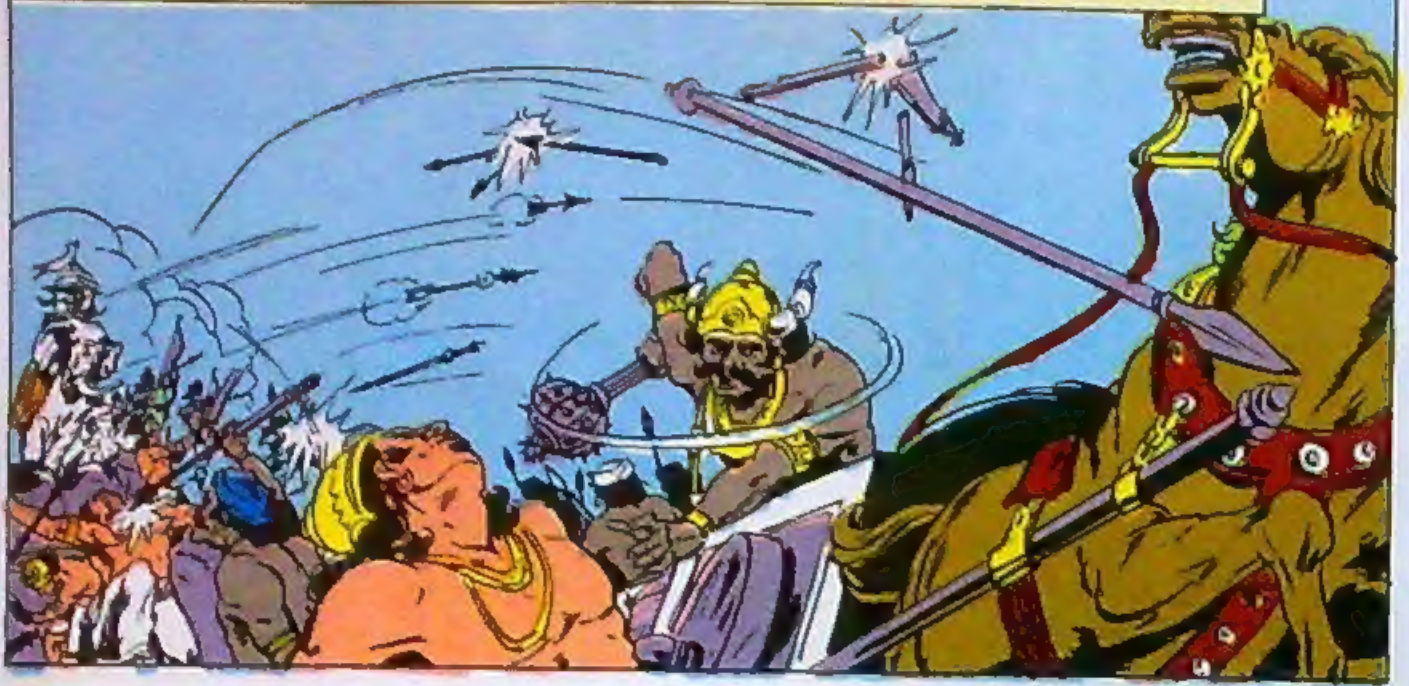


STUNG BY MAHISHA'S WORDS, INDRA DARTED FORWARD BRANDISHING HIS WEAPON — THE THUNDERBOLT.

ATTACK, O DEVAS, LET NO ASURA ESCAPE.



THEN ENSUED A FIERCE BATTLE BETWEEN THE DEVAS AND THE ASURAS.



SEVERELY BEATEN, THE DEVAS HAD TO RUN FOR THEIR LIVES.



AFTER DRIVING THE DEVAS OUT OF AMARAVATI, MAHISHA ASCENDED INDRA'S THRONE.

I AM THE LORD OF LORDS.
HENCEFORTH I ALONE SHALL
BE WORSHIPPED. THE WOR-
SHIP OF BRAHMA, VISHNU
AND SHIVA SHOULD BE
STOPPED FORTHWITH.



MAHISHA'S MEN BEGAN TO HARASS THOSE PIOUS MEN WHO CONTINUED TO WORSHIP VISHNU OR SHIVA.



* A FORM IN WHICH SHIVA IS WORSHIPPED

MEANWHILE, UNKNOWN TO THEM, THE DEVAS HAD ALREADY ASSEMBLED AT KAILAS, THE ABODE OF LORD SHIVA.

WE ARE HELPLESS AGAINST MAHISHA. WILL EVIL TRIUMPH OVER RIGHT-EOUSNESS?



EVEN AS THE DEVAS SPOKE, AN INTENSE LIGHT ISSUED FORTH FROM THE ENRAGED FACES OF SHIVA, VISHNU AND BRAHMA.



IT WAS JOINED BY SIMILAR RAYS OF LIGHT FROM INDRA AND OTHER DEVAS. AND LO! THE NEXT MOMENT, OUT OF THAT LIGHT A FEMALE FORM WITH A THOUSAND ARMS CAME INTO BEING! IT WAS DEVI DURGA.



O DEVI, YOU ARE THE ORIGIN OF ALL THE WORLDS. YOU ARE DURGA. YOU ARE THE INNER FORCE, THE SOURCE OF ALL STRENGTH. DESTROY MAHISHA AND PROTECT US!



SHIVA DREW FORTH A TRIDENT FROM HIS OWN TRIDENT...



...AND OFFERED IT TO DURGA.



VISHNU AND OTHER DEVAS, TOO, OFFERED WEAPONS TO DURGA.

O DEVI, ACCEPT THIS DISCUS.

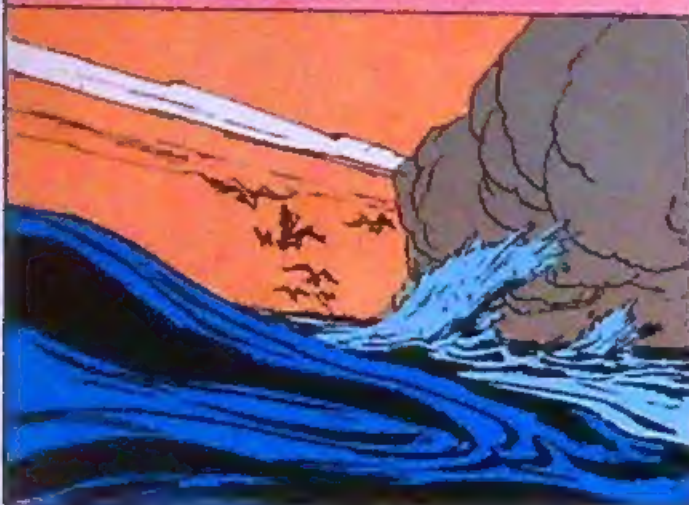
— AND THIS THUNDERBOLT.



ARMED WITH THE CELESTIAL WEAPONS AND MOUNTED ON A LION, DURGA EMITTED A BLOOD-CURLING ROAR.



THE SEAS TREMBLED...



...THE EARTH SHOOK AND THE MOUNTAINS ROCKED.



MAHISHA'S HEART MISSED A BEAT.



HE RUSHED OUT OF HIS PALACE TO FIND OUT.



NO! I AM NO MERE FEMALE! I HAVE COME TO FULFIL BRAHMA'S BOON. YOU WANTED TO DIE AT THE HANDS OF A WOMAN, DIDN'T YOU?



MAHISHA HASTILY STEPPED BACK AND CALLED TO HIS MEN.



AS THE ASIRAS HURLED VARIOUS WEAPONS AT HER, DURGA BREATHED HARD.



AS SHE BREATHED, THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS CAME INTO BEING AND FOUGHT AT HER SIDE.



HER MOUNT STRODE THROUGH MAHISHA'S ARMY, DESTROYING THOUSANDS OF ASURAS.



MAHISHA SEETHED WITH FURY.

I'LL
ANNIHILATE
THIS MONSTER
AND HER
HORDES.



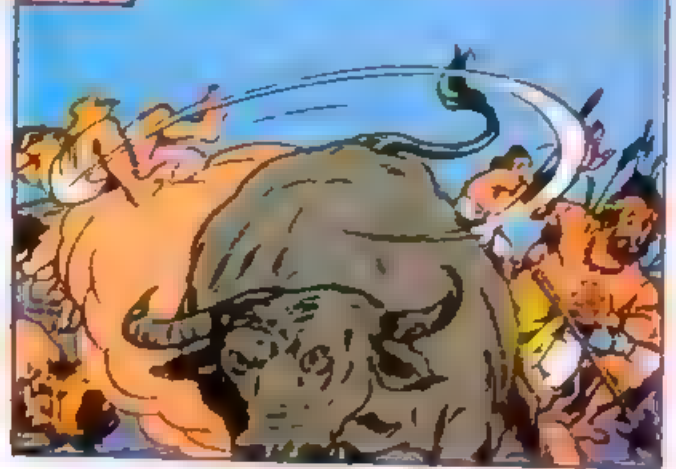
ASSUMING THE FORM OF A BUFFALO, MAHISHA CHARGED FORTH SNORTING AND BELLOWING.



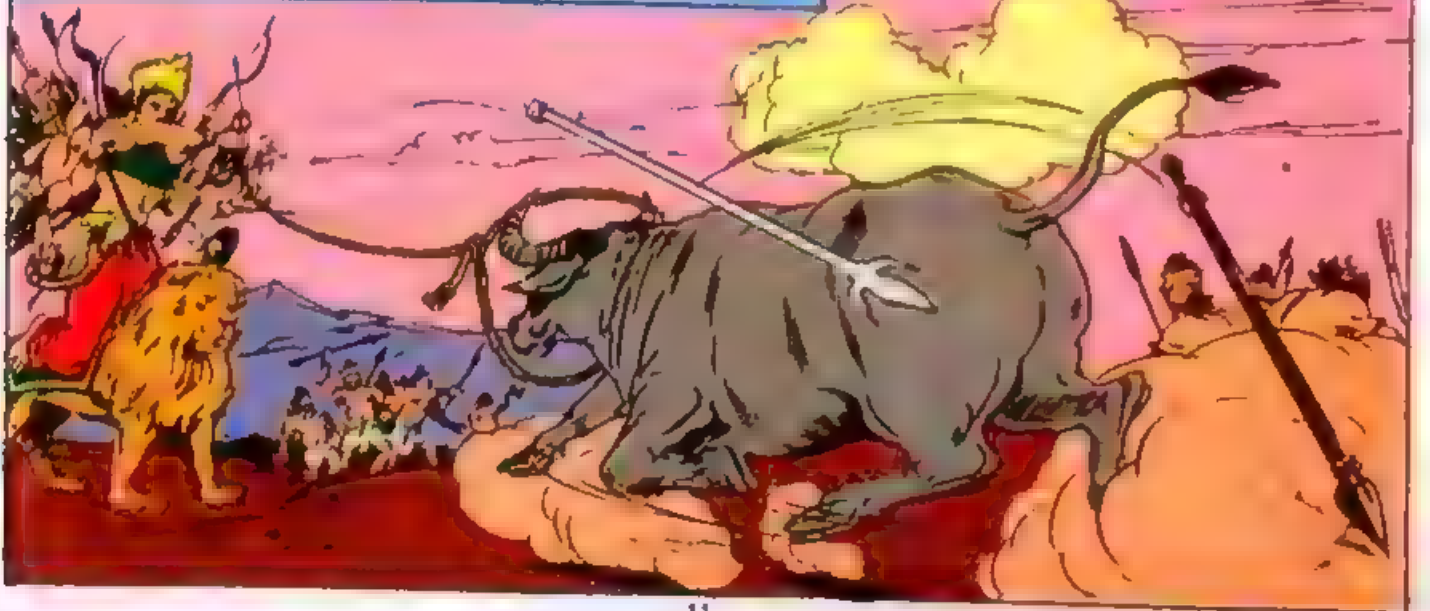
HE TRAMPLED UPON DURGA'S MEN . . .



.. AND LASHED AT THEM WITH HIS TAIL .



ENRAGED, DURGA FLUNG A NOOSE AT HIM.



MANISHA WOUND HIMSELF WITH
A HOT ARROW ...



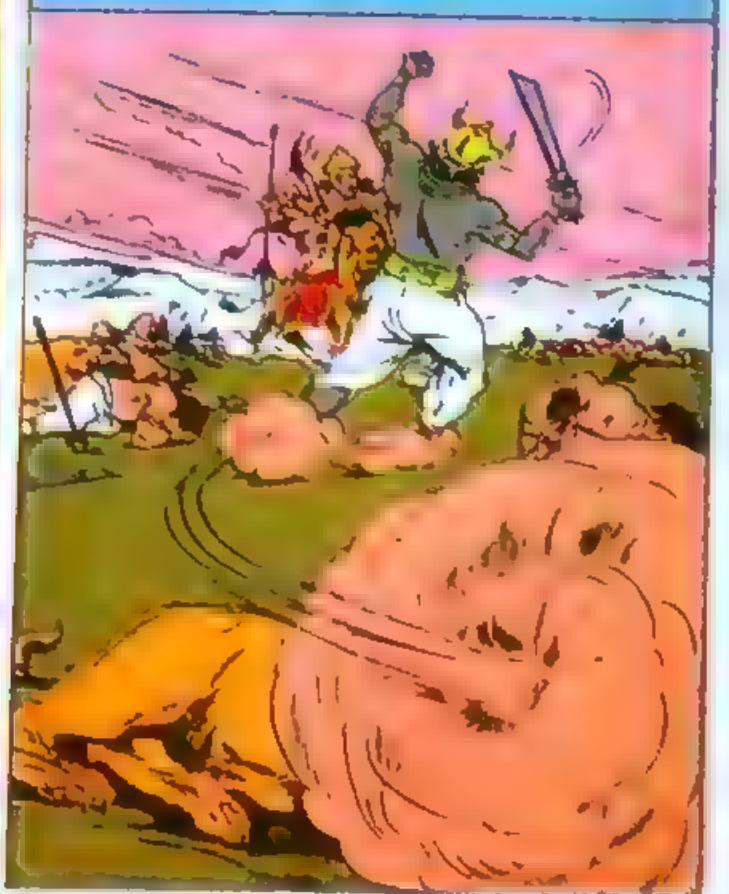
TRANSFORMED HIMSELF INTO A
LION AND POUNCED UPON DURGA.



AS DURGA CHOPPED OFF THE
HEAD OF THE LION ...



... MANISHA ROSE IN HIS OWN
FORM AND CHARGED.



LATER HE RECOVERED THE CORN OF AN ELEPHANT AND THREW IT IN THE
MOUTH OF HIS TRUNK



PIRGA LOOKED OFF THE TRUNK WITH
HER EYES



HANNAH AGAIN RECOVERED THE CORN
OF A BUFFALO AND THREW IT IN
THE

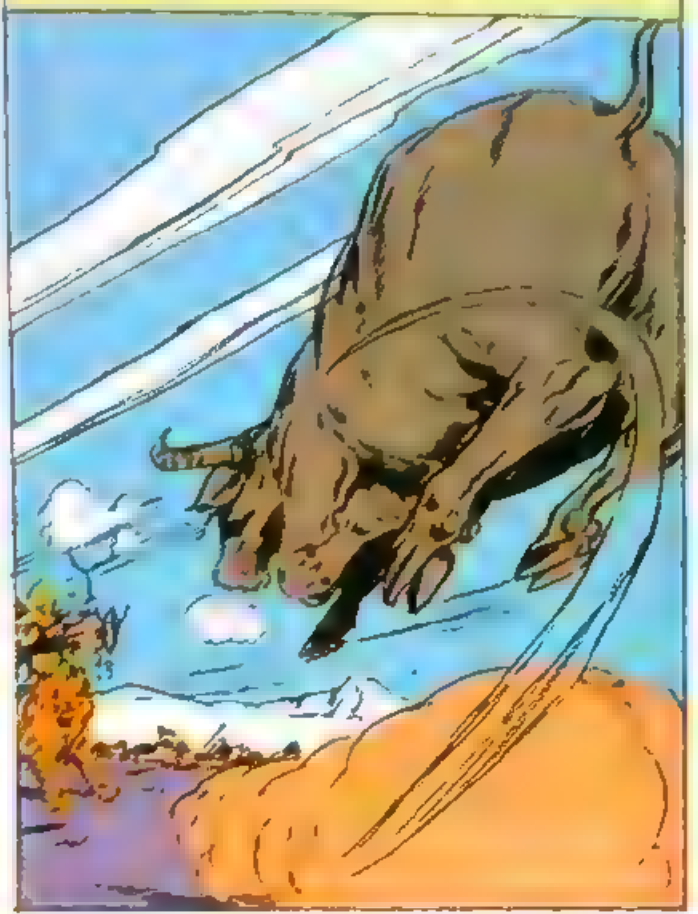


DURGA LOOKED AT HIM WITH CONTEMPT.

SNORT,
O FOOL! IN A
MOMENT, THE
DEVAS WILL
ROAR IN TRIUMPH
AT THIS VERY
PLACE, WHEN
YOU ARE
SLAIN!



ENRAGED, MAHISHA RUSHED AT HER.



BUT DURGA LEAPT UPON HIM AND PINNED HIM DOWN.



MAHISHA STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF, AS HALF OF HIM EMERGED FROM THE MOUTH OF THE BUFFALO, DURGA RAISED HER SWORD.



THE NEXT MOMENT, MAHISHA FELL DEAD, AT THE FOOT OF DURGA THE DEVAS WERE OVERJOYED.



O DURGA, UPHOLDER OF VIRTUE, DESTROYER OF EVIL, WE HUMBLY SALUTE YOU ! O DEVI, CONTINUE TO PROTECT US !

CHAMUNDI



ON ANOTHER OCCASION, THE DEVAS WERE DRIVEN OUT OF HEAVEN BY SHUMBHA, THE LORD OF THE ASURAS.

CHANDRA AND MUNDA, SHUMBHA'S COMMANDERS, FOLLOWED THE DEVAS

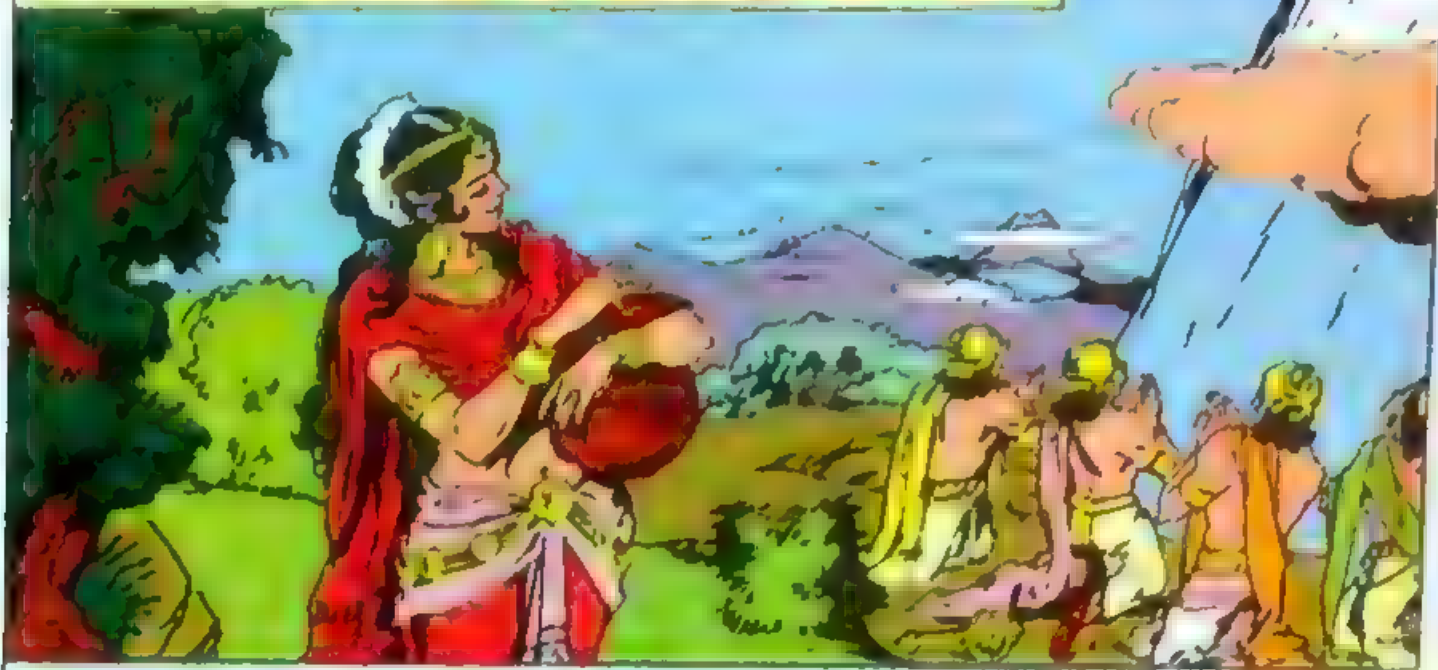
LET'S FIND OUT WHERE THEY GO AND WHY

THE DEVAS WENT TO MOUNT HIMAYAT AND PRAYED TO DURGA.

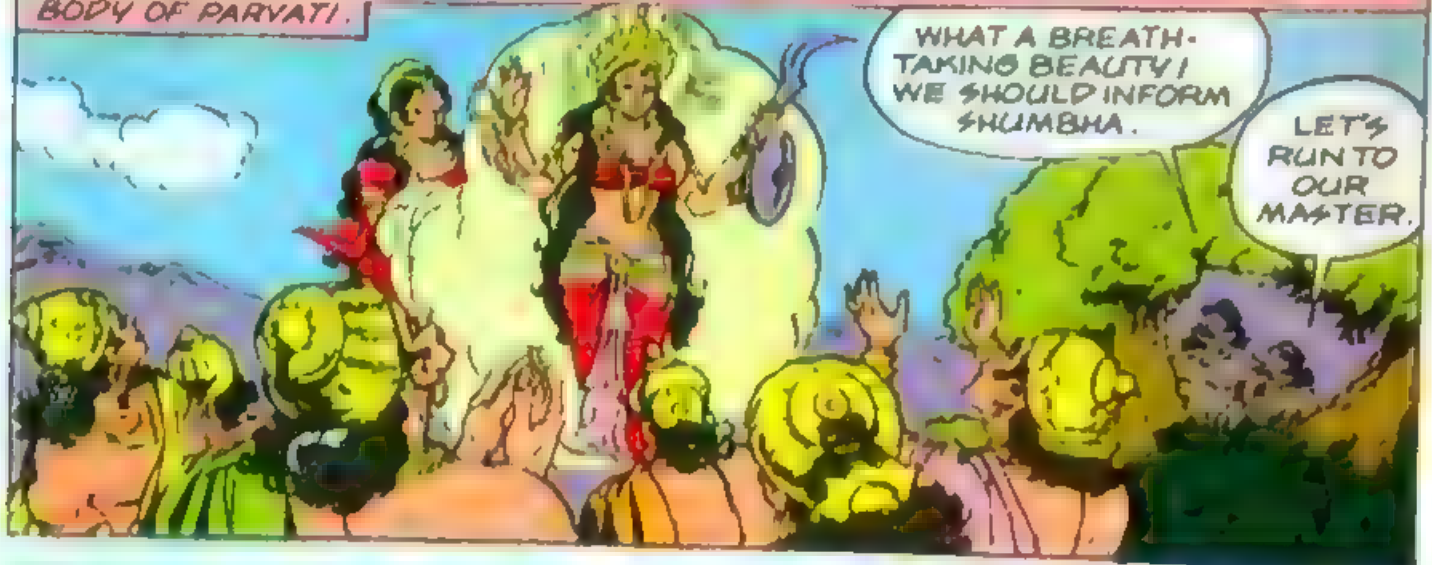
O DURGA, PROTECTOR OF THE VIRTUOUS, DESTROY THE EVIL SHUMBHA AND RESTORE RIGHTEOUSNESS.



JUST THEN PARVATI, SHIVA'S CONSORT, WHO WAS ON HER WAY TO THE RIVER, HAPPENED TO PASS BY.



AND LO! THE NEXT MOMENT, GODDESS AMBIKA SPRANG FORTH FROM THE BODY OF PARVATI.



WHEN CHANDA AND MUNDA RUSHED TO THE PALACE OF SHUMBHA AND DESCRIBED AMBIKA TO HIM.





WHEN CHANTIA AND MUNDA CONVEYED
AMBIKA'S MESSAGE TO HIM --

IF IT'S BATTLE
SHE WANTS,
SHE SHALL
HAVE IT.

THEN HE TURNED TO ANOTHER OF
HIS COMMANDERS, DHUMRALOCHANA.

GO, AND
BRING HER
TO ME.

DHUMRALOCHANA TOOK AN ARMY TO MOUNT HIMAVAT AND CONFRONTED AMBIKA.

IF YOU DON'T GO TO
MY LORD, OF YOUR OWN
FREE WILL, I'LL HAVE TO
TAKE YOU TO HIM
BY FORCE.

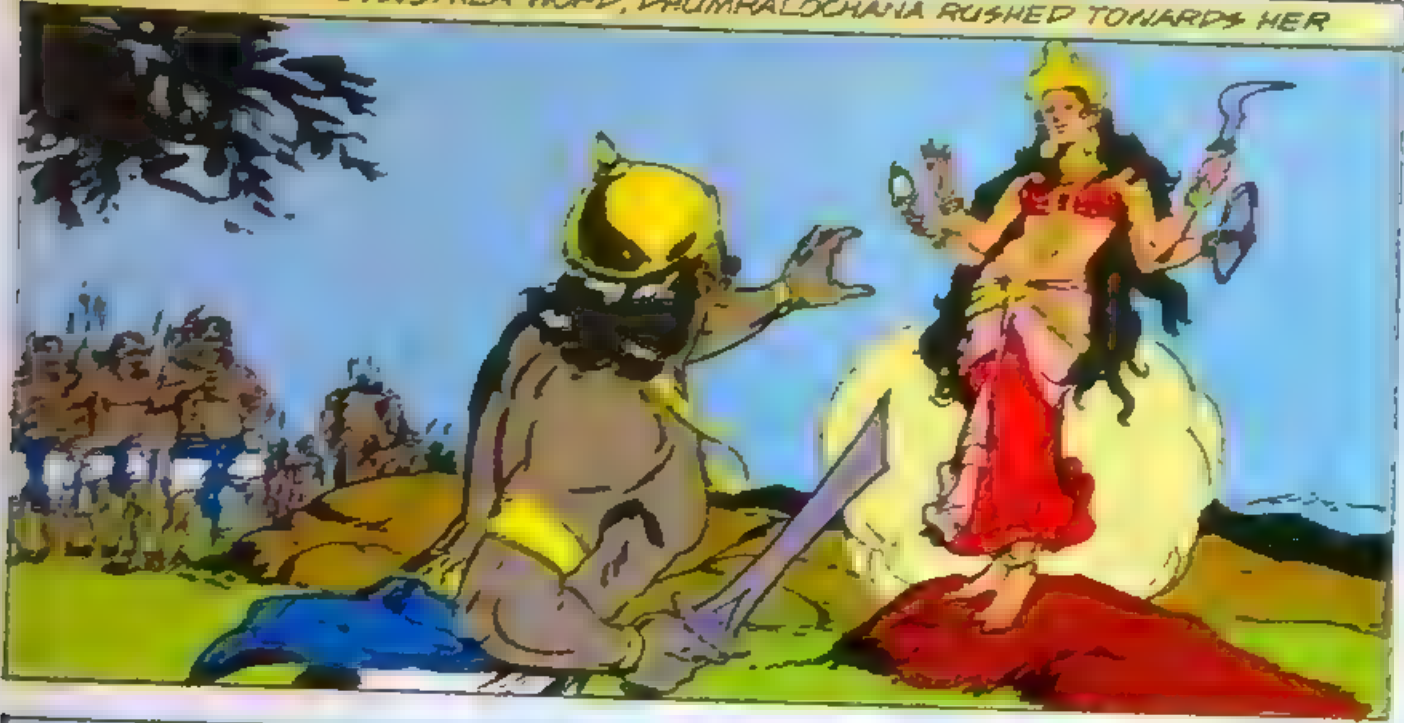
AMBIKA PRETENDED TO BE AFRAID.

ALAS! SPARE
ME. I AM A
HELPLESS
WOMAN.

THEN MARRY
OUR LORD!

MY VOW DOES
NOT PERMIT ME TO
MARRY HIM WITH-
OUT FIGHTING
HIM.

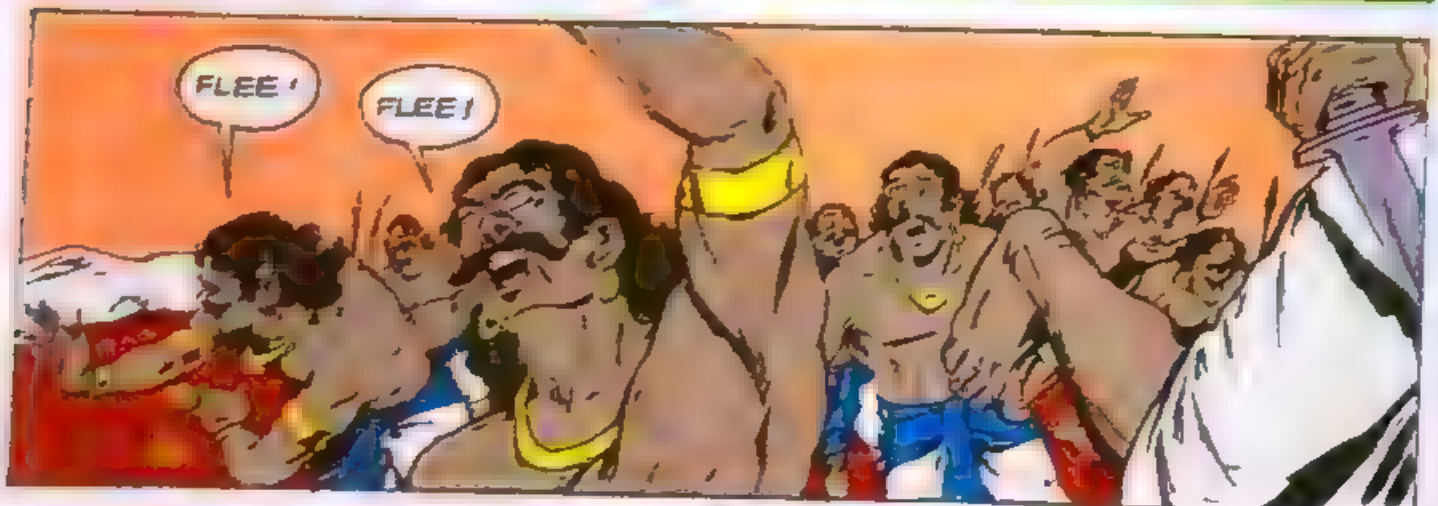
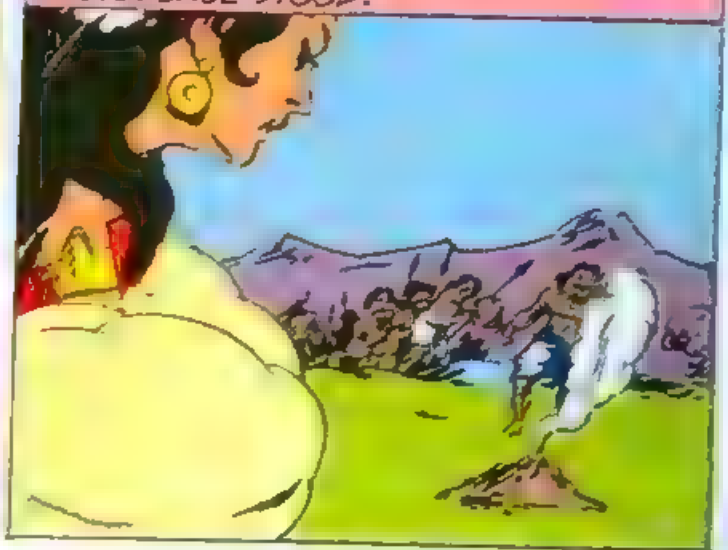
WITHOUT WASTING ANOTHER WORD, DHUMRALOCHANA RUSHED TOWARDS HER



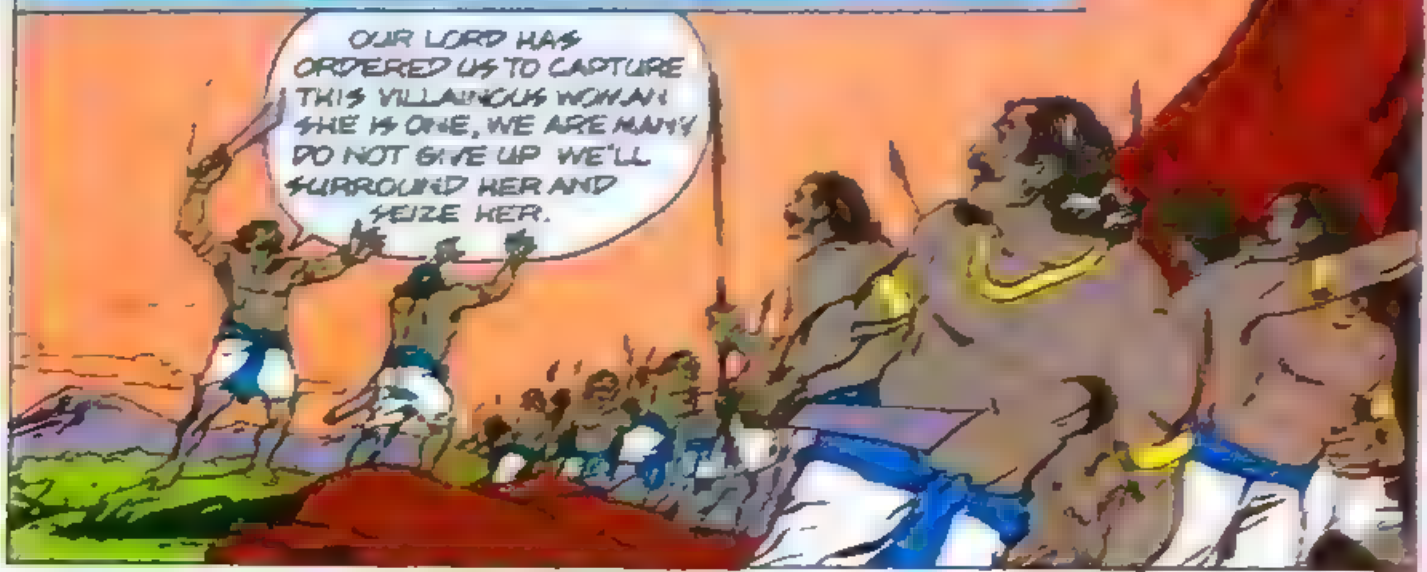
WITH UTTER CONTEMPT FOR THE ASURA, AMBIKA UTTERED A SINGLE SYLLABLE.



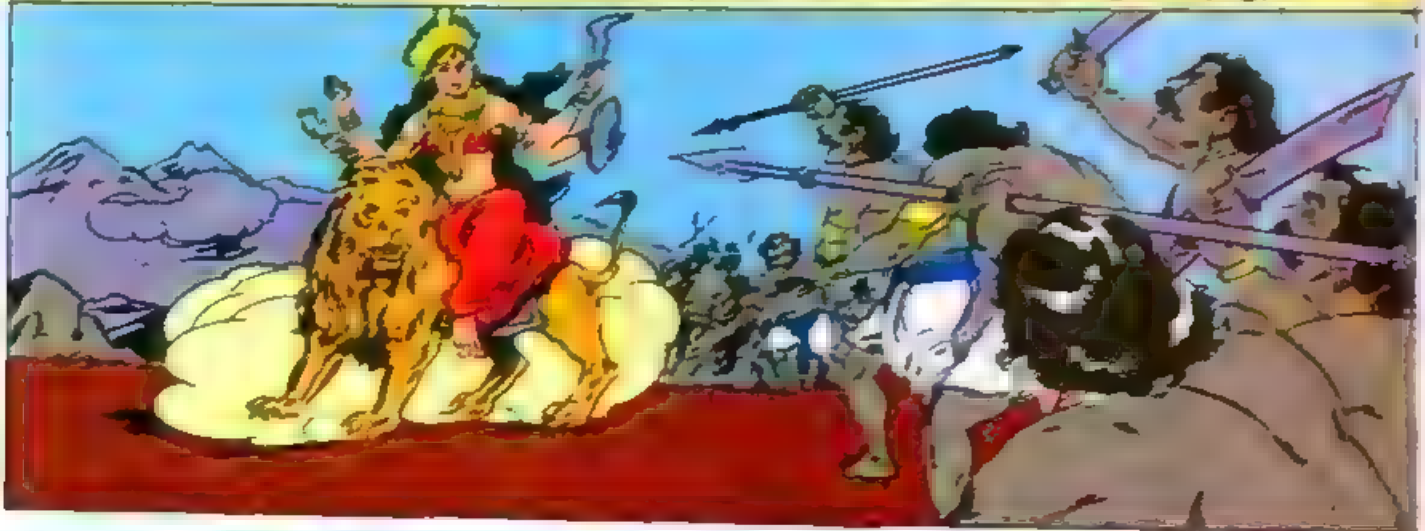
THE NEXT MOMENT, A HANDFUL OF ASHES SMOULDERED WHERE THE MIGHTY ASURA ONCE STOOD.



BUT CHANDRA AND MANDRA STOPPED THE RETREATING ASURAS.



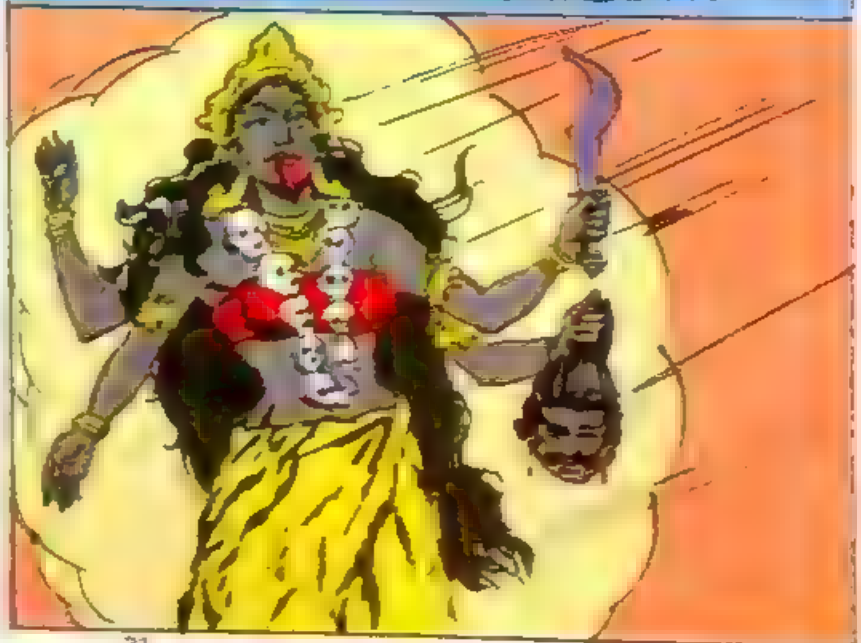
WHEN THE ASURAS CLOSED IN ON AMBIKA, WHO WAS NOW SEATED ON A LION...



...SHE FROWNED.



OUT CAME KALI FROM HER FOREHEAD...

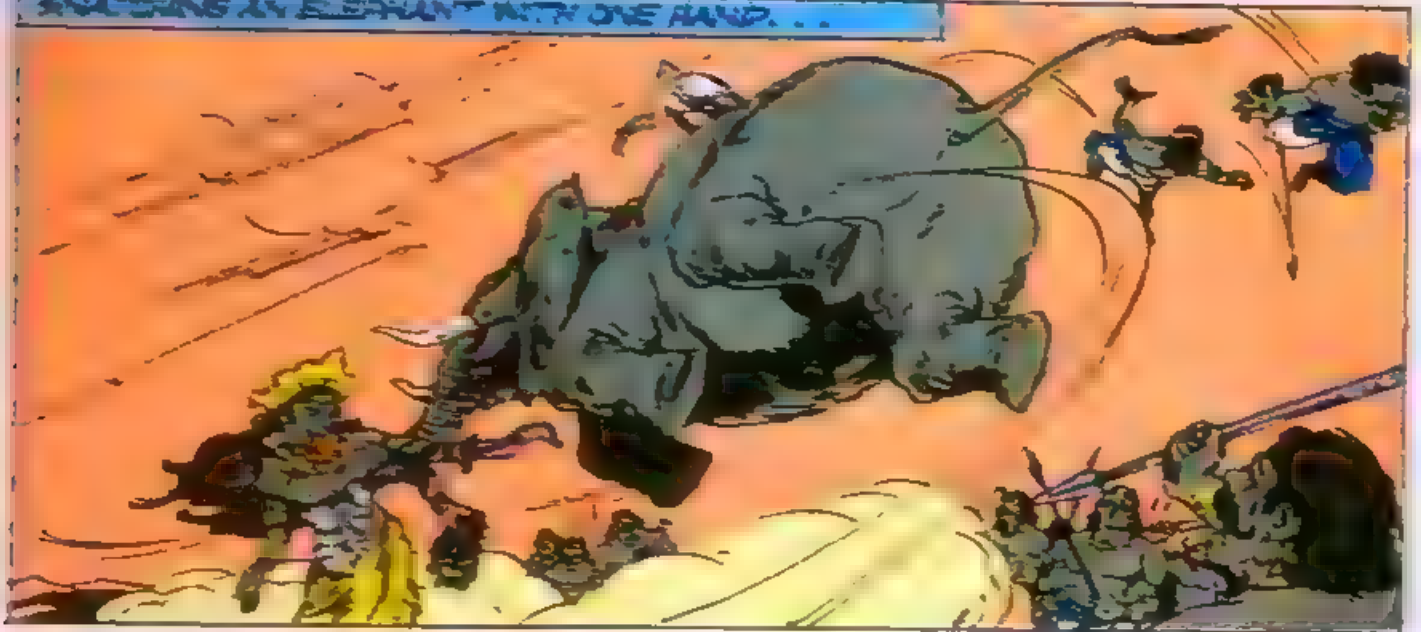


• AN INCARNATION OF DURGA

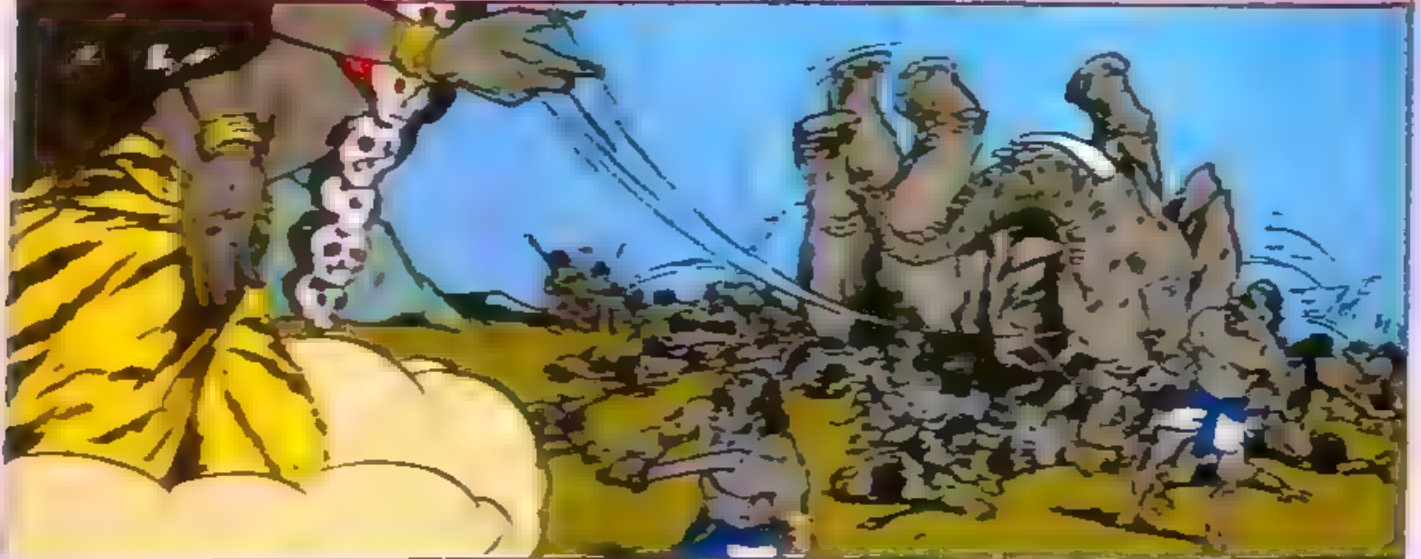
AND CRASHED AT THE AGURAS.



SMASHING AN ELEPHANT WITH ONE HAND...



... SHE HURLED IT AT THE AGURAS AND CRUSHED THEM TO DEATH.



CHANDA RUSHED AT KALI.



KALI SEIZED HIM BY THE HAIR...



BLIND WITH FURY, MUNDA RUSHED FORTH



AMBIKA SMILED AT KALI.



HOW DURGA SLEW SHUMBHA



WHEN SHUMBHA LEARNED THAT CHANDI AND MURIDA HAD BEEN KILLED, HE CAME IN PERSON TO DEAL WITH AMBIKA. HIS HUGE ARMY SURROUNDED AMBIKA AND MALI.

THEN THE SHAKTIS — THE INNER FORCE OF VARIOUS BODY — ISSUED FORTH ASSURING FEMALE FORMS*. OUT OF BRAHMA EMERGED BRAHMANI...



* EACH OF THESE FORMS IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN INCARNATION OF DURGA

OUT OF VISHNU, VAISHNAMI.



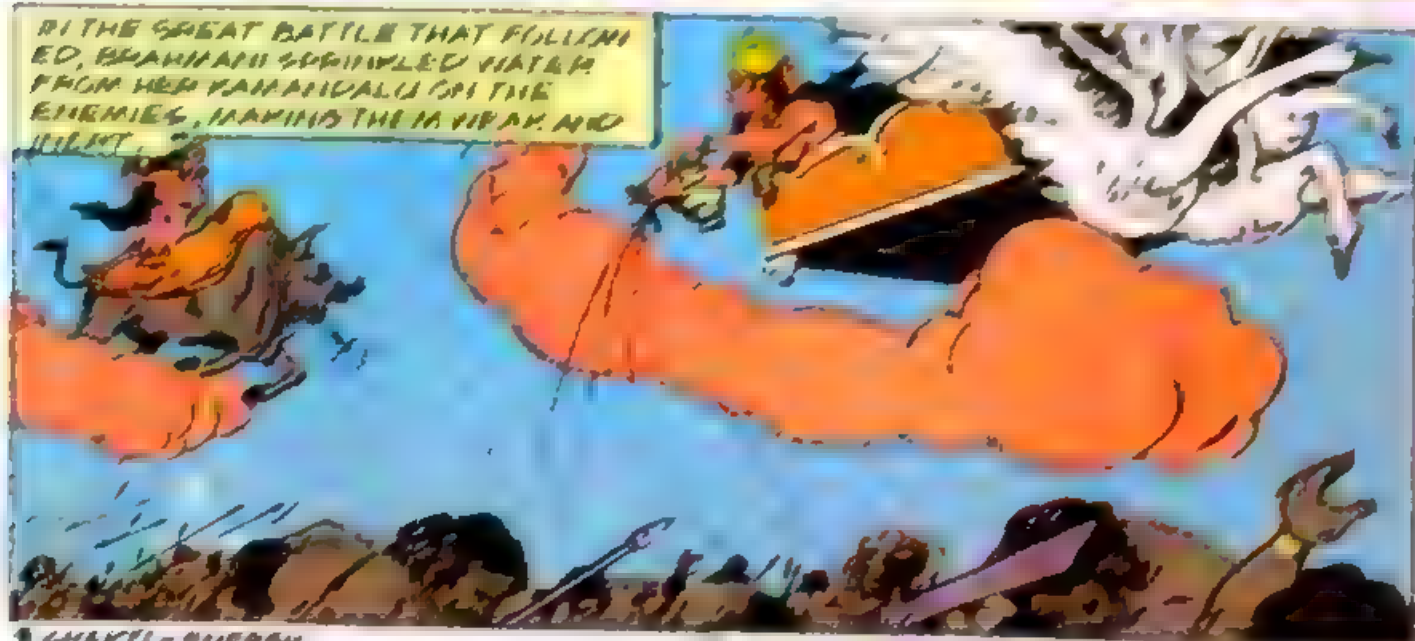
AND OUT OF MAHESHWARA MAHESHWARI.



FINALLY OUT OF AMBINA EMERGED CHANDIKA. SOON THE SKY WAS FILLED WITH HUNDREDS OF SHAKTIS.



IN THE GREAT BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED, BHAKHAMI SPRINKLED WATER FROM HER KAMANDALI ON THE ENEMIES, MAKING THEM BLIND AND DEAF.



SHAKTI = BURESSY

VAISHNAVI FOUGHT WITH THE DISCUS, MAHESHWARI WITH THE TRIDENT, AND VARIOUS OTHER SHAKTIS WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE WEAPONS. UNABLE TO FACE THIS ONSLAUGHT, THE ASURAS BEGAN TO FLEE.



IT WAS THE TERRIBLE ASURA, RAKTABEEJA.

AS RAKTABEEJA RUSHED FORTH, INDRA'S SHAKTI STRUCK HIM WITH HER THUNDERBOLT.



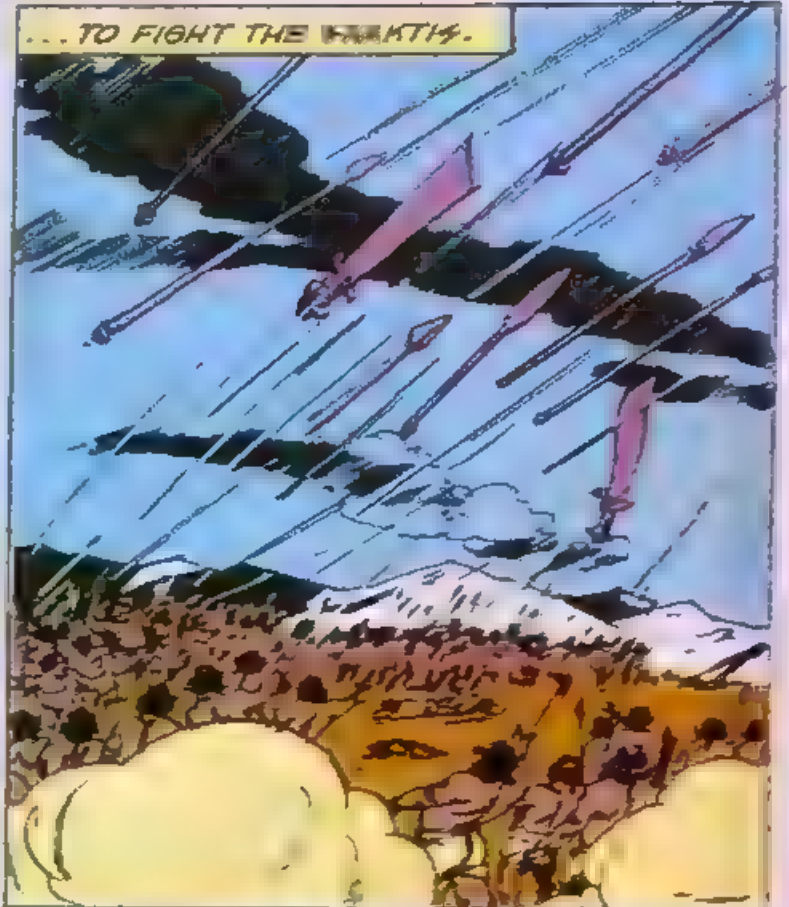
AS EACH DROP OF THE BLOOD FLOWING FROM HIS WOUND TOUCHED THE GROUND...



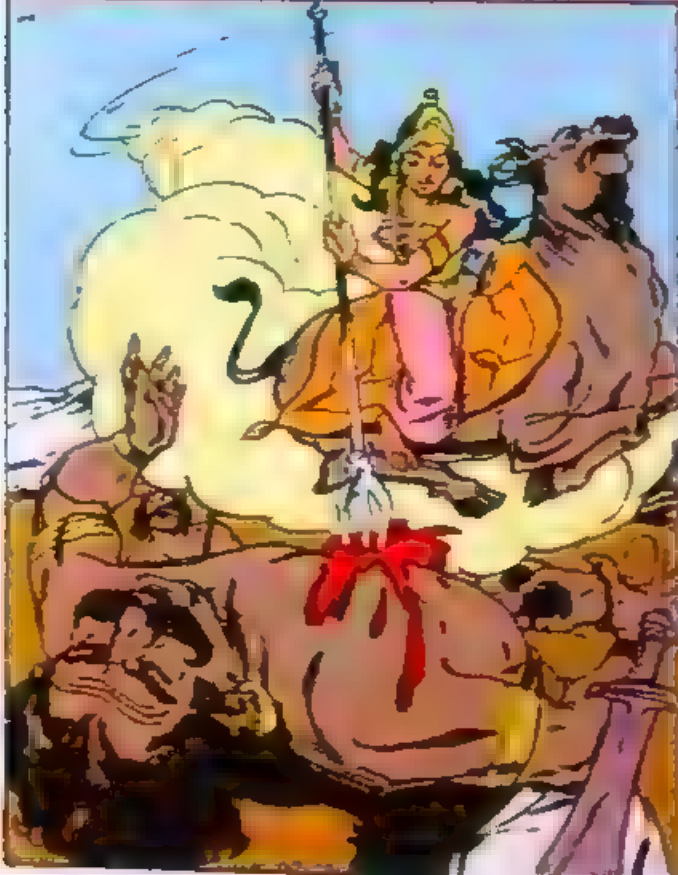
... THERE ROSE A MIGHTY ASURA,
HIS EXACT REPLICA ...



... TO FIGHT THE SHAKTIS.



AS THE SHAKTIS WOUNDED EACH OF THE ASURAS THIS BORN, OUT OF HIS
BLOOD ROSE MANY MORE ASURAS ...



AND SOON THE BATTLE SCENE WAS FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF KAKIA
BELLAS, WHO FOUGHT THE SHAKTIS.



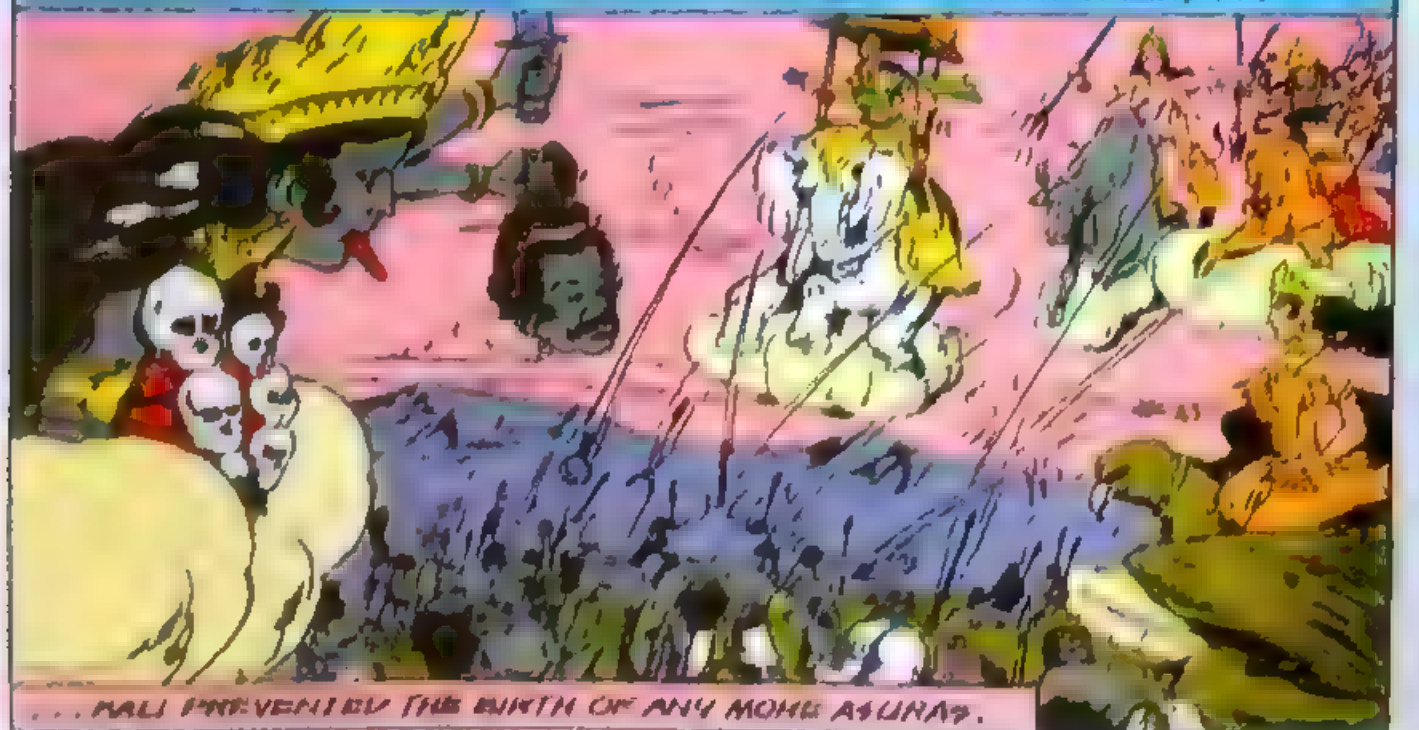
CHANDIKA TURNED TO HALI.

O CHAMBERLAIN,
THESE KAKIA-
BELLAS CAN BE
ANNIHILATED ONLY
IF WE PREVENT
THEIR BLOOD FROM
FALLING TO
THE GROUND.

LEAVE IT TO
ME. NOT A DROP
OF THEIR BLOOD
SHALL STAIN
THE EARTH
AGAIN.



AS CHANDIKA AND THE OTHER SHAKTIS ATTACKED THE KAKIABELLAS...



...HALI PREVENTED THE BIRTH OF ANY MORE ASURAS.

SINCE THE HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS OF RAKTABELLAS THAT HAD ARISEN WERE WIRED OUT, RAKTABELLA WAS KUNING.

I MUST KILL HER BEFORE SHE STRIKES THE FATAL BLOW.



AND RAKTABELLA RUSHED TOWARD CHANDIKA.



AS CHANDIKA STRUCK HIM . . .



... KALI PREVENTED HIS BLOOD FROM TOUCHING THE EARTH. . .

AND RAKTABELLA FELL DEAD, TO THE JOY OF THE DEVAS.



(VICTORY TO CHANDIKA!)



THEY TO THE AMAZEMENT OF BHUWANA, THE VARIOUS SHAKTS MERGED INTO DURGA.



FEELING DURGA, BHUWANA RANG
A TO THE MAY.



AFTER A FIERCE BATTLE IN
BHUWANA, DURGA FLUNG THE
MURKA DORN ...



...AND KLEN HIM WITH HER SPEAR, RESIDING, THE FEARS HEADED BY NORA
APPEARED ON THE SCENE.



WE SALUTE YOU O
MOTHER DURGA, DESTROY-
ER OF EVIL.



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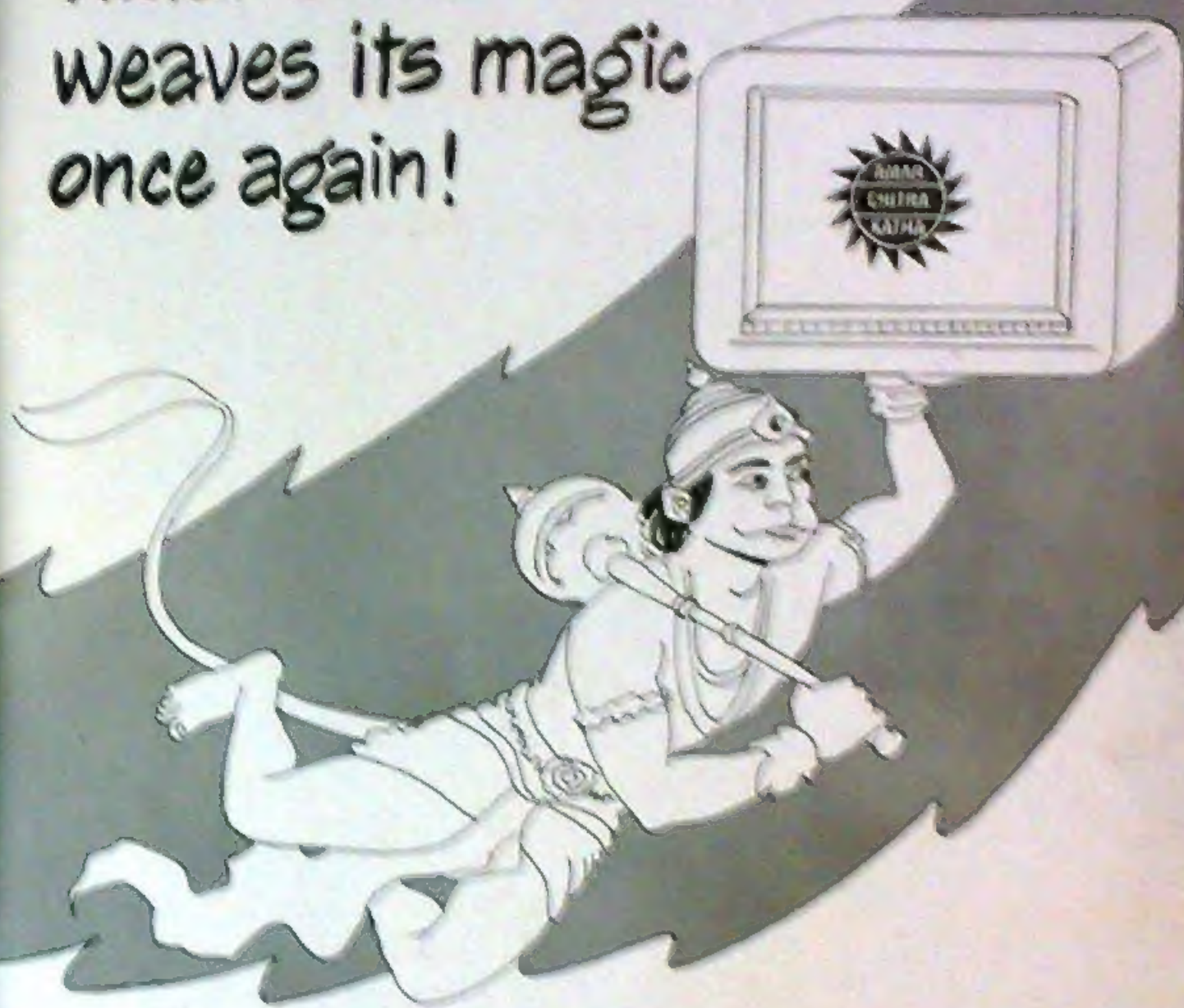
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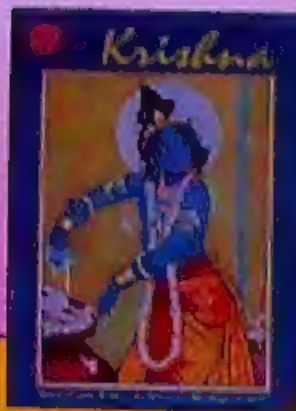
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